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Special short story: Drama of the three ladies

In the past, when they were creating the Great Tomb of Nazarick, the forty-one guild members known as the Supreme Beings implemented all sorts of unique designs into each level. For example, the forest in one level, the glacier in another. It was akin to sealing ten unique worlds inside the Great Tomb.

So what was the unique theme of the ninth level?

If it had to be compared to something, the best example would be a sacred castle.

Within that level was the personal room of the one who supervised all of the Guardians within the Great Tomb — the highest-ranked of all the NPCs, the 'Succubus of Pure White' Albedo. Her room was one of the few presidential suite-like rooms reserved for the Supreme Beings. However, only one Supreme Being was left. Instead of a room, it would be more adequate to call it a home.

A professional-grade grand piano lay in one corner of the living room, and all sorts of plants decorated the interior.

There were multiple kitchens and bedrooms, and two bathrooms.

From the grand art features to the wallpaper, the room's design was elegant, but not overwhelming.

Anyone who took in the sights might be so moved that they would sigh in awe.

Still, it would make impressing everyone just as difficult.

This was especially true now, given that beside the table covered in a white tablecloth was a girl with her arms crossed and her chin on the table. Her mood was anything but cheerful.

A cold brilliance resided within her half open eyes, but her depressed mood showed clearly through her beauty.

After entering this room, the vampire Guardian of the first to third levels, Shalltear, asked a question of her colleague, who had stayed in the same position all this while.

“Aura, what is the matter ~arinsu? You look just like the bugs that went against Ainz-sama’s will, that we tore apart.”

The one who answered wasn’t the dark elf Guardian of the sixth level, who was being queried, but the owner of the room, Albedo.

A gentle light shone through her golden pupils as she watched Aura with gentle eyes.

Although Albedo’s gaze was like being in the presence of a goddess, Aura did not look happy about being subjected to it.

“She must be tired. Unlike a devil like me, Aura is a dark elf, so sleep is necessary right?”

“I see!” Shalltear, who didn’t understand what Aura was really thinking about, nodded in agreement.

“……”

“I get it, Aura is still a kid, so it’s only normal that she looks bad after staying up all night … By the way, Albedo, devils don’t need to eat or sleep, but you can do so if you wish. Why is that?”

“Gluttony and sloth… We have always been able to indulge in the seven deadly sins of old. It is not very useful though.”

“The buff effects from food don’t work on devils. Even expensive items will just go into the trash.”

“Sigh.”

Aura sighed loudly enough for them both to hear.

The two of them, who were going off-topic, looked at Aura at the same time. Aura looked at them unhappily through her half closed eyes.

“It’s midnight right now, but I got enough sleep. I’m thinking about something else. Earlier when I met Demiurge, I was told ‘Aura, keep a tight rein on those two so they won’t go berserk’. How weird.”

Aura mimicked the serious tone of Demiurge, and the image of that serious Guardian of the seventh floor — a devil who often worked outside of Nazarick on Ainz-sama’s orders — came to their minds.

“Yup, that is weird.”

“Right?”

Albedo nodded in agreement.

“The only one who can hold my reins is Ainz-sama~♥”

“... Huh?”

Suspecting that she heard it wrong, Aura cupped her long elf ears to be certain.

“Ahh, you are right ~arinsu.”

Ignoring the confused Aura, Shalltear voiced support for the opinion.

“Holding a whip in one hand while riding on top, that’s the best ~arinsu. And as the whip lashes out— Ah! There has to be a ball in the mouth ~arinsu.”

Their conversation is heading in a weird direction, a pervert meeting another pervert might trigger something bad. Can someone please deal this?

That will probably be me, Aura concluded grimly, speaking out before the blushing Albedo with her wavering eyes could comment.

“... You got it wrong! Or rather, what he meant was for me to babysit you two. But why me?”

“That’s right, isn’t it weird to give the responsibility to you, who is the youngest here? I know, how about letting me take on this job!”

Albedo stuck her chest out as she was saying that. Shalltear did the same as if to oppose her.

Seeing the ample bosom that didn’t match Shalltear’s apparent age, Aura understood its true nature and felt sorry for her.

“Erm… Doesn’t that feel uncomfortable?”

“Uncomfortable?”

Aura who asked the question drooped her shoulders weakly, sighing like a middle aged man.

“Nah, never mind. Anyway, why did you ask us to gather here?”

“That’s true ~arinsu, I don’t know why too. What happened ~arinsu?”

“Actually… I have something I need to discuss with everyone.”

Normally, the highest ranking NPC, the Guardian Overseer, would only summon the Floor Guardians for matters of highly important matters.

That, however, was what an uninformed person would think.

Aura, who understood Albedo’s nature, averted her eyes and reached for a triple layered cake, sparkling with silver light at a corner of the table.

She stuffed the large piece of cake made by the head chef into her mouth as a means of escaping reality. Aura knew this trip to Albedo’s room was a waste of time and consoled herself in this way.

“Wait, Aura, are you listening?”

“Yes yes, I’m listening, just spit it out.”

Aura didn't stop her hands, slowly filling her plate with cakes, taking care to not let them fall over. If they did, she wouldn't be able to squeeze the whipping cream onto her plate.

"You are not taking this seriously at all…"

Albedo's tone was displeased, and Aura stopped as she became aware of her companions. She certainly hadn't stopped because her plate was full.

"You can discuss with Shalltear too, right… What a pain, really. Well, what's the matter?"

"Actually, it is about my armour."

"Armour? What is wrong with it ~arinsu?"

"Before I begin, I would like to understand how much you know about my armour."

Aura and Shalltear exchanged looks briefly and said:

"The armour created by a Supreme Being?"

"I heard that is the only Divine-class magic item you possess, ~arinsu."

Magic items were categorized according to the amount of data they held — in other words, the magic power of this world. Starting from lesser-class, medium-class, greater-class to the highest class of items, Divine-class.

“Yes, both of you are right. My armour ‘Hermes Trismegistus’ is a Divine-class magic item. However…”

Albedo took out a sturdy and tough-looking suit of black armour out of thin air.

The armour stood beside her with a soft metallic clang.

“Shalltear, you can use item appraisal spells, right? Could you cast them on this armour?”

“No problem ~arinsu.”

Shalltear stood up from her seat and walked towards the armour. She activated her magic, but frowned right after that.

“What the…” she coughed. “It is a Divine-class item, but the performance is… Could it be, ~arinsu, it was enchanted with magic disruption spells ~arinsu?”

“No… My armour specializes in physical defence, but has no other abilities.”

Aura felt that this was really troubling.

Since Albedo had the role of a tank in combat, she had to fend off the opponent's’ attacks and thus she was focused on defence. However, having no other abilities would be a problem too. For example, resistance against fire or ice, or general resistance against magic. There could also be other useful abilities, such as strength enhancement or reduction in mana consumption. Compared to pure stats enhancement, such abilities would be stronger, but…

“What of it, Albedo? Complaining about the armour bestowed onto you by the Supreme Beings… Don’t joke about that sort of thing.”

— Not showing reverence to the Supreme Beings was unforgivable.

Shalltear’s eyes became sharp and dangerous when Aura finished her words.

“No, don’t misunderstand me. I didn’t say that. First of all, this armour suits me the best. This is my trump card— No, I have something that could be called that too.”

After gaining job levels with prerequisites that were a pain to fulfill, one could learn a unique skill. They were usually known as trump cards. For example, Shalltear was able to create an avatar with the same stats as herself.

By the way, Aura didn’t have such levels, so she didn't possess trump cards like these.

“My trump card is the special skill that transfers the damage I take onto the armour. By using this skill, I can avoid one attack, no matter how powerful it is. Yes, I can escape unscathed from even the most powerful super-tier spell that Ainz-sama is proudest of. However, the damage will be absorbed by the armour instead, and it might break from that blow even if it was enchanted with strengthening spells.”

“Hmmm, this skill is powerful, but the usage is kind of awkward.”

Basically, magic items such as armour would not be destroyed unless they were targeted by specific spells. Also, metal was durable and highly resistant to to pure energy attacks like lightning, flame or ice. Hence, armour made from metal was hard to destroy. Which meant that metallic armour had high defence, but low HP.

And so, if Albedo diverted the damage to the armour, it would ignore the armor's defence, which meant that it would be unexpectedly easy to break the armour.

Her defence would fall drastically after the armour was destroyed, and it would make her an easier target. It might be called a trump card, but that was just an empty title to buy time. That was how Aura felt about it.

"Yes, my combat potential will plummet if my armour breaks. However, Shalltear who appraised this armour should have realized it. My armour was made with this skill in mind. Also, most trump cards can only be used once a day, but mine can be used three times a day."

"Hmmm? Just enhancing it with magic will increase its HP, but it wouldn't be able to survive three attacks right?"

Shalltear reacted faster than Albedo who was about to answer Aura's query.

"I see, so that's it, ~arinsu."

Aura, who suddenly felt a chill from the giggling Albedo, turned sharply towards Shalltear. Shalltear who understood what was going on started explaining.

"That might look like a single piece of armour, but it is actually three pieces in one. You could call it triple-layer armour."

"Ahh," Aura uttered as she finally understood. Which meant that the armor would take three attacks to break.

"That's how it is, Aura. I'm glad you can understand."

“I get it, an armour made specifically for Albedo’s trump card. As expected of the item crafted by the Supreme Beings.”

Aura suddenly thought of the problem.

“So, what’s wrong with it?”

“Like I said, calm down. We’re getting to it now. But first, let me talk about the armour. The innermost layer is an armour in liquid form, which fits my body perfectly, and enhances my physical abilities. Next would be a full-body armour layer, like an undershirt. And finally, the outermost layer covers the inner layers and boosts their defenses.

“Okay.”

“And so, the order of them breaking would be from the outer layer…”

Albedo took a deep breath and Aura gulped. What could the problem be?

“— My skin exposure level doesn’t increase when my armour breaks!!”

Aura wondered if she misheard something.

Ignoring Shalltear who was commenting “I see”, Aura leaned forward to be sure of what she was hearing.

“You understand, right? Skin exposure should go up after the armour breaks! I don’t want to show my skin off to those bugs, but as someone who works closely with Ainz-sama, there are plenty of opportunities to defend him as a vanguard. In that case, armour that increases skin exposure is necessary to entice Ainz-sama!”

Albedo revealed the foolish side of her.

“Magnificent ~arinsu! Albedo, you are absolutely right ~arinsu!”

The number of idiots increased.

Aura pitied her earlier self.

Why did I take them so seriously just before? Idiots.

She looked at the stupid duo with narrowed eyes, as if she was watching them from afar.

“This is the only armour I have. I don’t have things like bikini armour or skin-tight armour.”

“Well, I have something like that from the clothing Peroroncino-sama gave me… However, I don’t expect much from them in terms of defence ~arinsu.”

Albedo inhaled sharply, and a strange expression that blended passion and professionalism appeared on her face.

“That won’t do. While we are ‘servicing’ Ainz-sama, we also have to act as his shields. It won’t do unless both objectives are met.”

Her idiocy returned in no time.

“Do you understand, Shalltear? Your armour lacks skin exposure, too. What we should strive for is sexiness and performance, an armour that serve these two purposes at the same time!”

It did not matter, but it would give her a headache in the future if Aura ignored this now. She should get these irritating matters out of the way as soon as possible.

“That kind of armour… No matter what kind of armour, attacking the exposed part of the body will deal more damage.”

“But! If there are armour pieces that look like string bikinis, it would increase the chance of making babies with Ainz-sama!”

Albedo erected her fingers into a V sign.

“That isn’t armour… Just something that looks like it.”

“How about thinking about the problem from another angle ~arinsu! An invisible armour will do nicely ~arinsu, just covering the important parts would be enough ~arinsu.”

“It will walk!” <TL: Jap pun>

Where do you want to walk to, you two. No, it won’t be good no matter where they walk.

Aura thought as she shook her head and sighed softly. She just wanted to wash her hands of this topic.

“Let Shalltear take care of it, then.”

Asking in her heart to a comrade who was not present to help, Aura poked her fork into the cake on her plates.

The cake melting in her mouth enticed her with its sweetness, relieving the fatigue in her brain.

“Ah, delicious.”

Her companions, who had progressed from the development of the armour to a passionate discussion of armour theory, faded away from Aura’s sight.

However, she still empathized with the craftsman who had to make this armour.

“Can someone inject some common sense into the brains of these two? Ahhh, it can’t be helped, and asking Ainz-sama would be rude too.”

After finishing off a slice of cake in three bites, Aura reached for the next piece.

Appendix 1: Introduction to types of spells

In the world of Yggdrasil, there are four types of spells, which are dependent on the ability of the user.

The four categories are Arcane, Divine, Mental and Alternative. Magic that seems more western in nature are Arcane type, restorative spells used by priest are Divine, oriental magic using talismans are Mental type, and all others are classified under Alternative.

And from these types, they are further divided by systems into defensive-type, necromancy-type, elemental-type, movement-type, and so on.

On top of that, their strength is divided into ten tiers, with an additional super-tier on top. There are more than six thousand spells.

Ainz is able to use 718 spells. Considering the fact that normal level 100 players can only use 300 spells, he is an exceptional case.

In the world of Yggdrasil, spells above the eighth tier are the norm in a battle between level 100 players. However, in the new world Ainz is in, skilled magic casters can only use spells up to the third tier.

Those who can use fifth tier magic are considered to be people within the realm of heroes.

Normal humans cannot cast seventh tier spells. The Slane Theocracy can barely manage to do so with the help of large-scale rituals.

Lightning
Third tier magic that discharges a straight bolt of lightning in the direction where the finger points. It is very effective against opponents wearing metal armour.

Create Undead
Third tier magic that creates zombies.

Angelic Summon - 3rd
Third tier magic that summons angels. It is possible to summon an Archangel Flame with this spell. Higher-level versions exist that summon more powerful angels. For example, the seventh-tier version summons a high-ranking Dominion of Authority.

Dragon Lightning
A bolt of white lightning in the form of a dragon will form in the direction of the finger. It is a fifth-tier spell. The effect is the same as lightning, in that it works great against metal armour.

Holy Smite
Seventh tier magic cast by Dominion Authority. Engulfs the target with a cleansing light pillar, does extra damage to evil aligned targets.

Heart Grasp
Ninth tier magic that crushes the heart of the target, one of Ainz' favourites out of his many necromantic spells. Even if the target resists the instant-death aspect of the spell, it will still daze the opponent.